

- d. drawing a preselected level of vacuum within said sealed shell for time sufficient to evaporate moisture from said heated material to a desired degree of dryness;
- e. moving said shell to a discharge position at which said shell is opened;
- f. discharging said dried material from said shell; and
- g. moving said shell to said fill position and sequentially repeating steps (a) through (f) for so long <sup>as said</sup> ~~as such~~ granular plastic material is to be continuously dried.
10. The method of claim 9 wherein said heating further comprises introducing air into said shell at a desired material temperature, measuring temperature of said air as it exits said shell, comparing said exit air temperature to said desired temperature and halting heating when said exit air reaches said desired temperature.
11. The method of claim 9 wherein said heating further comprises capturing heating air leaving said shell for recycling through said shell.
12. The method of claim 10 wherein said heating further comprises capturing heating air leaving said shell for recycling through said shell.

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13. A low pressure dryer for granular or powdery material, comprising:

- a. a shell movable among material filling and heating, vacuum drying and material discharge positions;
- b. means for moving said shell serially among said filling and heating, vacuum drying and discharge positions;
- c. means for heating contents of said shell at said filling and heating position;
- d. means for drawing vacuum within a said shell at said vacuum drying position; and
- e. means for selectably permitting downward flow of dried granular or powdery material out of a shell at said discharge position.

14. The dryer of claim 13 further comprising:

- a. means for sealing said shell at said vacuum drying position.

15. A low pressure dryer for granular or powdery material, comprising:

- a. a plurality of shells movable among material filling and heating, vacuum drying and material discharge positions;
- b. means for moving said shells serially simultaneously among said filling and heating, vacuum drying and discharge positions;
- c. means for heating contents of a shell at said filling and

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heating position;

- d. means for drawing vacuum within a shell at said vacuum drying position; and
- e. means for selectably permitting downward flow of dried granular or powdery material out of a shell at said discharge position.

16. The dryer of claim 15 further comprising:

- a. means for sealing a shell at said vacuum drying position.

17. The dryer of claim 15 wherein said shells are collectively movable among material filling, drying and discharge positions.

18. A low pressure dryer for granular or powdery material, comprising:

- a. a plurality of shells collectably movable serially among material filling, drying and discharge positions;
- b. means for moving said shells among said filling, drying and discharge positions;
- c. means for heating shell contents prior to arrival at said drying position;
- d. means for sealing said shells at said drying position;
- e. means for drawing vacuum within said shells at said drying position; and
- f. means for emptying dried granular or powdery material